

were false and misleading, influenced the debate in this House and the decision to go to war. It is imperative we have open public hearings to wash this stain from our national reputation.

URGING PRESIDENT TO PROVIDE FLOOD ASSISTANCE

(Mr. PENCE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PENCE. Mr. Speaker, last night the Wabash River crested at 25 feet in northeastern Indiana, but thanks to the extraordinary leadership of Mayor Ted Ellis and Sheriff Barry Story, Bluffton, Indiana, was spared a catastrophe. Their leadership and cooperation with Governor Frank O'Bannon and literally thousands of volunteers in Wells and Adams counties managed to stem the tide.

Special commendation to Irving Material, Incorporated, and also to the 2nd of the 152nd Mech out of Muncie, Indiana, under the leadership of General Bushkirk and Colonel Shato who led the troops, nearly 200 in number, in loading sandbags and stacking sandbags and saving the community of Bluffton, Indiana.

As more rain approaches, I urge the President to speed disaster relief to the counties in Indiana that the Governor has requested. I encourage the volunteers for their determination to move forward as the rain approaches, and I urge prayers by all of our citizens to remember the Psalmist wrote that God is our refuge and our strength. Though the Earth be removed, though its waters roar and be troubled, we will not fear.

FOURTH ANNIVERSARY OF IRANIAN STUDENT PROTESTS

(Mr. LANTOS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, a few days ago, on the 4th of July, we celebrated our freedom. Today is the anniversary of the Iranian students' uprising a few years ago; 100,000 courageous, young Iranian men and women went to the streets of Teheran demanding their freedom, and their movement spread all over the country.

The mullahs in Teheran have suppressed them and still do; but hopefully, before too long, we will be able to see in Iran what we have seen in central and Eastern Europe and in the former Soviet Union, people living in free and open and democratic societies, rejecting the totalitarian police state of the mullahs, a regime which is determined to develop nuclear weapons and a regime which is the center of global support for terrorism.

SAVED

(Mr. PITTS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1

minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, recently I heard an amazing story. For 22 years, Jawad Amer Sayed was a dead man. Instead of fleeing into exile as a member of the Iraqi opposition group, he decided to stay; and for 22 years, he hid inside a false wall he built between two rooms in his home.

On April 10, the day after Saddam Hussein fell from power, Sayed emerged from his hideaway, to the amazement of relatives and friends. Only his mother, younger brother and two sisters knew what had happened to him. Everyone else thought he was dead.

Saddam Hussein murdered millions. Not only did he kill those opposed to him; he tortured them and their families, and his brutality forced millions into exile from fear. Sayed's story is a testament to that fear. Rather than torture and death, Sayed chose solitary confinement.

There are millions of Iraqis like Sayed who have come out of hiding into the light of day. Now they can talk about freedom. Now they can protest. Now they can worship freely. Now they can express opinions about their government, and now they can choose something other than death or confinement. They can choose liberty.

RISING UNEMPLOYMENT RATE

(Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the President bothers to take a look outside his helicopter window on his way from Crawford, Texas, to the White House to see the millions of people pounding the pavement looking for jobs.

Once again, the national unemployment rate has risen. It is now 6.4 percent, up from 6.1 percent in May; and the unemployment rate for Hispanics, it is even higher, up to 8.4 percent.

Moreover, millions of students across the country this month are graduating from college, with over \$20,000 in debt from student loans, wondering if they are going to get a job to begin to pay off those loans.

With the economy in a state of flux at home, what does the President say? He says "bring 'em on" to those who are attacking troops in Iraq. If the President wants to bring something on, how about a fiscal plan that creates jobs, that does not plunge us further into debt and that allows us to care for seniors in their golden years?

It is unfortunate that he cannot be as confident and cavalier about the future of our economy as he is being about the lives of our troops.

MEDICAL LIABILITY CRISIS

(Mrs. BIGGERT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1

minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. BIGGERT. Mr. Speaker, my home State of Illinois has been especially hard hit by the steep rise in medical malpractice insurance rates. In the greater Chicago area, premiums have increased between 24 and 34 percent over the past year. As a result, physicians cannot afford to keep treating patients and are forced to either limit what patients they can treat or close down their practice.

When doctors cannot afford to keep their practices open, patients suffer; and because doctors in high-risk specialties like OB/GYN are hit the hardest, women patients suffer the most.

The same thing is happening all over the country, with one exception. California already has in place a State law very similar to legislation the House passed earlier this year, and it is working.

I urge my colleagues in the other body to pass medical malpractice reform legislation and make sure patients' access to health care does not suffer.

MALPRACTICE BILL IS A CRITICAL ISSUE FOR PHYSICIANS

(Mrs. CHRISTENSEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Mr. Speaker, this week the Senate will take up their malpractice bill. This is a critical issue for physicians; and it should provide real relief, not just be a political tool.

Like the one the House passed, all the Republican bill in the other body would do is cap the punitive and non-economic damages and limit attorneys' fees. While some level of caps may need to be a part of effective legislation, this measure is just an attack on lawyers who they see as supporters of Democrats.

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The cap is not fully researched and is likely to hurt poorer and younger patients. Caps alone do not lower malpractice premiums as shown in a recent study of seven States that passed cap legislation where premiums continue to rise.

The American people are tired of political responses to important issues. The better Democrat approach is comprehensive, would bring insurance companies under the antitrust laws, and possibly cap premiums while a task force studies the best way to move ahead. Republicans would apply a simple political Band-Aid to this major wound from which the medical community is hemorrhaging and in the process free insurance and managed care companies from any accountability for decisions they make on our care by including them in a cap that is meaningless with their huge profits. That is the whole purpose of the bill, protecting corporate friends. It is not good medicine. This Congress should spit it out.